

Tuesday - October 24, 1995 - 2:10 p.m.

WORKSESSION

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Chris Peterson; Councilwoman Barbara Field, Councilman Gary McClure (arrived in meeting at 2:33 p.m.), Councilwoman Leni Sitnick, Councilman Joseph Carr Swicegood (arrived in meeting at 3:12 p.m.) and Herbert J. Watts (arrived at 3:38 p.m.); City Attorney William F. Slawter; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: None

UN DAY

Mayor Martin thanked Ms. Hazel Fobes for furnishing the Council with some information on United Nations Day. This week the United Nations celebrates its 50th anniversary. He highlighted some efforts accomplished.

Mr. Ralph Bishop made negative comments concerning the United Nations.

Recognition of Hungarian Local Government Officials

Mayor Martin welcomed and the City Council presented gifts to Mr. Gyula Krajczar, Mayor of Komarom; Mr. Jozsef Miskolczi, Mayor of Nyergesujfalu; Mr. Antal Szekely, Mayor of Oroszlany; Mr. Laszlo Konozy, Mayor of Esztergom; Mr. Janos Csige, Managing Director, Komarom-Esztergom Local Enterprise Agency, Tatabanya; and Mr. Gyorgy Kovacs, President, Komaron-Esztergom County Council, Tatabanya. Mayor Martin explained that these local government officials are visiting our region as part of a U.S. Agency for International Development sponsored program focusing on Local Government and Economic Development.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES

Mr. Marvin Vierra, Community Development Director, said that the Community Development Block Grant Program ("CDBG") has provided the City with funding in excess of \$36,693,234 since its inception in 1974. A large portion of the funds have been used for housing activities. The HOME Investment Partnerships Program has provided the region with funding in excess of \$1,779,438 for housing activities since its inception in 1992.

The City's Consolidated Plan states that 29% of the City's 26,890 households have housing problems. The total households in need of housing assistance therefore, are 7,798.

The City has relied heavily on federal funds to provide for the housing needs of its residents. State funding has provided some assistance primarily to non-profit and for-profit housing providers. The primary source of federal funds for housing has been the CDBG. City Council has given affordable housing projects the highest priority for funding during recent years and a majority of the funds are currently allocated to housing projects. Other cities in North Carolina have used bonds and ad valorem tax revenue to provide for the housing needs of residents.

There are currently five non-profit housing providers receiving CDBG and HOME funds from the City for housing activities. The City assumed administration of the City-wide housing rehab program on July 1, 1995. -2-

He then briefed the Council on historical information on Asheville' CDBG and

HOME programs. He reviewed funding sources and projects administered by other cities.

Mr. Larry Holt, Executive Director of the Housing Authority, answered some questions raised by Mr. H.K. Edgerton relative to the HOPE 1 Program, which is a federally created program. Councilman McClure clarified that a buyer under the HOPE 1 program would no longer be qualified under the first time home ownership program.

Councilwoman Field said that the Housing & CD Committee is looking into the possibility of setting up a roundtable committee to look into innovative ways of funding housing and neighborhood improvements.

Councilwoman Sitnick suggested the hiring of a part-time or full-time grants administrator, whose sole job would be to look for and apply for grants. She felt sure that there are a lot of grants available, but the City is unaware of them and are not applying for them. She stressed the City needed to find other areas of revenue streams in lieu of raising taxes. She also suggested giving a hard look at the use of impact fees and not only for infrastructure but also schools and housing. If the City is going to be seriously committed to help with the needs of our community, then we are going to have to look at big money! If we don't find other sources of revenue we won't be able to accomplish anything.

Upon inquiry of Mr. H.K. Edgerton about housing projects, Vice-Mayor Peterson said that it is Council's goal to have people own their own homes.

Councilwoman Sitnick added that the Housing & CD Committee is not only committed to dignified affordable housing, but decent rental housing too for those who prefer not to own their own home, for whatever reason.

Councilwoman Sitnick then expanded on Councilwoman Field's comments about the roundtable committee. She said that once this committee is formed, with non-profit groups, City staff, Housing Authority staff, and interested citizens in the community, they will discuss these issues and come up with real implementable solutions. She invited Mr. Edgerton to become a member of the committee and offer it his solutions and ideas.

QUARTERLY MINORITY BUSINESS REPORT

Mr. Larry Fisher, Finance Director, said that this quarterly report is for the quarter ending September 30, 1995. He detailed minority business participation by (1) certified minority business in four classifications and (2) minority businesses, both certified and non-certified in those same classifications. He then briefed Council on the report noting that each classification identifies the amount of participation and the goal attainment by each minority category. He said that there was not too much of an increase over the last quarter, however, he felt other progress has been made.

When Mayor Martin asked for any suggestions for improvements, Ms. Marilyn Bass, Minority Business Coordinator, said the City should have "listened to the recommendations (of the consultants who were hired by the City) and not changed them." She said that "had we done that, we would have been in a better situation." Mr. Fisher responded that he -3-

suggested spreading the word to minority owned businesses to become certified and let them know that the City is interested and committed in doing business with them.

Mayor Martin then instructed the City Manager to "dust off" the disparity study

in order that Council can become more familiar with it.

When Mayor Martin asked if the figures for minority business participation were realistic, Ms. Bass felt that the goals were realistic. She once again stressed that the City should look at what the consultants recommended in the draft "because the final report, they changed because they were pressured to change." She "was told that the study was compromised." When questioned by Councilman McClure on who told Ms. Bass the study "was compromised," Ms. Bass responded "one of the consultants, the project coordinator, consultants."

Upon inquiry of Councilwoman Sitnick on why some businesses did not respond when they were asked to become certified, Councilwoman Field explained that some eligible businesses didn't need the City's business and didn't want to have to go through all the paperwork.

Upon inquiry of Vice-Mayor Peterson, Ms. Bass reminded the Council of the members on the Minority Business Commission.

When Councilman McClure asked if our standards were stricter than federal standards, Ms. Bass replied that they are not.

Discussion then surrounded our service area, if goals are measured on an on-going basis or if there was a beginning point, if there has been an impact on the goals since the City is doing less construction and less consulting contracts, and why people do not get certified.

Mr. H. K. Edgerton noted several problems with this program. Some reasons he cited were (1) the City should have promoted Ms. Bass to a department head instead of placing her in the Purchasing Division; (2) department heads do not take Ms. Bass seriously; (3) Ms. Bass has no staff; (4) there were improprieties with the Sondley Estate project; and (5) the make-up of the MB Commission has no African American male members on it. He feels the above reasons are why the minority businesses do not want to do business with the City. Mr. Edgerton felt that people on the low end of the scale have to be given the opportunity to move forward.

Mayor Martin urged Mr. Edgerton to become part of the solution, not part of the problem. He suggested Mr. Edgerton submit his recommendations in writing so that staff will have the opportunity to work on them.

City Manager Westbrook said that even though there was no progress during this quarter, long-term gains will be realized.

ADVERTISEMENT OF AN OFFER OF PURCHASE FOR UPSET BIDS REGARDING DISPOSAL PARCEL 30 OF THE EAST END/VALLEY STREET COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AREA

Mr. Ed Vess, Coordinator of Field Service, said that the bid of Anthony J. Tozzi, in the amount of \$6,210 is the higher of two bids received for the purchase of Disposal Parcel 30 in the East End/Valley Street Community Improvement Area in an amount not less than the established minimum price of \$6,100.

Disposal Parcel 30 is a residential lot at the corner of Curve Street and Alexander Drive comprising 10,672 square feet. The bid from -4-

Anthony J. Tozzi for Disposal Parcel 30 includes the proposal to build a duplex, with each unit containing 3 bedrooms and 1-1/2 baths for his personal residence and rental at an anticipated cost of \$107,340. Mr. Tozzi has applied for the Incentive Housing Program (\$1 lot) subsidy.

When Vice-Mayor Peterson asked where the \$6,200 would go, Mr. Vess stated that it would go back into the CD program income.

When Mayor Martin asked Council if they had any problem in placing this item on the Consent Agenda for the next formal meeting, Mr. Ralph Bishop was opposed to placing anything on the Consent Agenda.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

ADVERTISEMENT OF AN OFFER OF PURCHASE FOR UPSET BIDS REGARDING DISPOSAL PARCEL 82 OF THE EAST END/VALLEY STREET COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT AREA

Mr. Ed Vess, Coordinator of Field Services, said that a bid has been received from Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Logan for the purchase of Disposal Parcel 82 in the East End/Valley Street Community Improvement Area at the established minimum price of \$650.

Disposal Parcel 82 is a fragment parcel at the corner of Hazzard Street and Pine Street comprising 3,049 square feet. It does not meet the minimum standards for a buildable lot. Mr. and Mrs. Logan own a home adjacent to Disposal Parcel 82 and it is their intent to combine that parcel with their lot for additional yard space. Mr. and Mrs. Logan do not plan any construction on this parcel.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

BUDGET AMENDMENT REGARDING FUND TRANSFER FOR CITY-WIDE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OPERATIONS

Mr. Lyle Willis, ADA Coordinator, said that a transfer of funds is needed to fund administrative costs for ADA compliance and to establish the 1995/96 ADA Capital Project appropriation as approved in the 1995/96 CIP.

The City is committed to continue to achieve ongoing improvement in its ADA compliance. In order to continue, funding for support staff and other resources is needed. A transfer of funds appropriated from the General Fund Contingency is needed to meet the funding requirements.

The funds would be used to continue additional staff support to assist the City ADA Coordinator and to improve ADA compliance in two parts based on approved CIP budget funds. The two parks approved for these funds are Murphy-Oakley Park and Weaver Park.

Staff requests Council approval in the transfer of funds from the General Fund Contingency in the amount of \$25,000 for administrative costs and the transfer of \$150,000 from the Non-Departmental Fund to the 1995/96 ADA Project as approved in the 1995/96 CIP.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

BUDGET AMENDMENT TO APPROPRIATE FAIR HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT FUNDS

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Mr. Marvin Vierra, Community Development Coordinator, said that this budget amendment, in the amount of \$16,700, is to appropriate Fair Housing Assistance Program grant funds.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

FINAL PLAT APPROVAL FOR WILSON CREEK SUBDIVISION

Mr. Gerald Green, Senior Planner, said that Advantage Development Company and WNC Habitat for Humanity is proposing the subdivision of a 12.26 acre tract into a 32 lot residential subdivision. A final plat has been prepared. The property is located off of Caribou Road. The developers have begun the construction of a new street which will provide access to the lots. The street will be constructed to City standards and will be dedicated to the City for ownership and maintenance. The proposed public road will provide access from Caribou Road. A letter of credit has been provided to the City to guarantee the construction of the road and of other public improvements.

The preliminary plat for this subdivision was reviewed and approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission at their October 11, 1995, meeting. The final plat and the letter of credit have been reviewed by the Legal Division, the Public Works Department, and the Planning Department.

The Planning Department staff recommends that City Council accept the final plat for Wilson Creek Subdivision with the following conditions: (1) the location of the water line and easement be indicated on the plat; (2) the address of the subdivision's owner be included on the plat; (3) the certificate of ownership be revised to reflect ownership by a corporation; (4) the sizes of the metal culverts be indicated; and (5) the size of the box culverts at the creek be noted.

Upon inquiry of Councilman Watts about the bridge, Mr. Green said that the developer constructed the bridge at an approximate cost of \$40,000. The bridge will be dedicated to the City and then it will be maintained by the City.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal Council meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Municipal Bridge Inspections by NC Department of Transportation

Summary: A municipal agreement has been received from the N.C. Department of Transportation ("NC DOT") for having the City System bridges re-inspected. The Federal Highway Administration reimburses 80% of the bridge inspection cost which is estimated at \$1,600 per bridge. The City reimburses NC DOT for 20% of the cost for the bridges on the City Street System. The City has 24 bridges which qualify for inspection through the program. The City's share of the estimated cost will be \$7,680 and funds are available in the City's bridge right-of-way fund of the Capital Improvement Program.

Intent to close Parkwood Road between Haywood Road and Patton Avenue and calling for a public hearing on the matter for November 28, 1995

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Intent to close a portion of an unnamed alley between Elizabeth Place and Woodlawn Avenue and calling for a public hearing on the matter for November 28, 1995

Motion to set a public hearing on November 14, 1995, to consider designating the Rankin House (5 Woodlawn) as a local historic landmark

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate actions regarding the Consent Agenda items at the next formal meeting.

OPPOSITION HR 1020 AND ALL SIMILAR LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD REQUIRE HIGH LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE TRANSPORTATION NEAR OR THROUGH THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Councilwoman Sitnick introduced Ms. Janet Hoyle and Mr. Lou Zeller from the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. She said that she "received a letter from Lou Zeller the third week in August asking if I would consider bringing this before Council. This is not a usual Council issue because it's far more reaching that our City. But really it is a very local issue and it's one that addresses preventative thinking and preventative government, rather than reacting to a crisis somewhere down the line that we have failed to envision today. I must tell you that I have been involved with nuclear issues for 20 years and am in deference to my fellow Council members and members of the public, I'm going to consolidate 20 years of concern into just a few minutes and I know you'll be very grateful to me for that. But I have to tell you that where nuclear issues are concerned, I consider nuclear problems the ultimate infringement of property rights. Because an accident anywhere with nuclear things is an accident everywhere. Chernobyl taught us that big time. The accident in Russia where the nuclear power plant melted down when valves and coolants and the reactor didn't act properly. One of the ironies of Chernobyl is the concrete building they built around the melted down power plant is now beginning to break down and there's concern that there's going to be another Chernobyl. Be that as it may, it's clear when it comes to nuclear substances - we are all at the whim of the wind. The wind picks the stuff up and kind of drops it here, and drops it there. Chernobyl contaminated parts of Europe, parts of Scandinavia, parts of America, and everything else in it's path. What I bring before you today is an opportunity to pass a resolution, and that's all it is, that will hopefully someday protect the wonderful son that Carr had, my children, all of our children, our neighbors. We have, since the Manhattan Project, be subsidizing with our tax dollars, mind you, the nuclear industry, to the tune of about \$40 Billion to date because we believed it was that the cheap manna from heaven that was going to give us cheap energy for ever and ever. Well, it turns out that it wasn't cheap after all because now the country is faced not only with the undaunting task of doing something about low level nuclear waste, which is very toxic by the way, and which we have no real good technology to deal with, but in the next couple of years, we are going to be faced with what are we going to do with the transuranics wastes and the high level nuclear wastes that are the fuel rods from nuclear power plants. We don't even know what we're going to do when we start decommissioning the nuclear power plants which are huge concrete and steel monoliths. You break them down, what are you going to do, truck them somewhere, bury them somewhere? The only project that I know of, and correct me if I'm wrong to date that has attempted to look into the permanent disposal of high level waste, was a project that occurred in caves out in the southwest and before they even finished building the caves, water was leeching through the rock. And you know water is the mobile transfer of nuclear materials. It's what's gotten into all of -7-

the pits at Barnwell and at other sites that have tried to bury low level waste. Water migrates into the area and carries the isotopes. Recently the Congress has passed a House Resolution No. 1020. And I'm going to let Janet and Lou talk about it, but I want you to consider this resolution, and that's all it is, that will basically protect Asheville in the future. And I use the word protect in quotes, like I said, we're at the whim of the wind. If there's an accident at Aiken or at the Savannah River plant, we're touched by it. I'd like to pass out these packets. If you would pass them to the members of the press for me, and pass these around for Council. Give me what's left. Let me just highlight a couple of points made in this material. Without a state publicly

acceptable permanent repository, high level waste is building up at 109 nuclear reactors across this country. Remember, this is an industry that we subsidize with our tax dollars and they don't know what to do with their garbage. They've never put money aside. They are looking to the taxpayer and the rate payer to not only pay those bills, but to accept the physical responsibility of nuclear waste."

Vice-Mayor Peterson wondered if Council passes the resolution, will it really make a difference.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "a few years ago, the federal government tried and it was beaten down by this community. They tried to create the Clinch River Breeder Reactor into a monitored retrievable storage unit where they would load it from a nuclear plant, truck it to the MRS, off load it, keep it there temporarily and then when they found a permanent solution, they'd on-load it again, truck it to another site and off-load it - all risky maneuvers. And was blocked also. The whole idea of this resolution is to say to the nuclear industry - stop generating this stuff. We're not going to make it easy for you to truck it through our cities and past our schools and past our churches and our homes. We're not going to make it easy for you to find a place to put it."

Ms. Janet Hoyle stressed that there is time to do something about HR 1020. She said that HR 1020 would establish a temporary storage depot for high level nuclear waste in Nevada at the test site and in 1998 the waste would begin to be shipped from 109 reactors from across the country affecting North Carolina and 42 other states. We would at that point take title and liability, as taxpayers of this country, to the industry's nuclear waste. The State of Nevada has generated a route map and the methodology for their study. Western North Carolina would be affected by the rail shipments of high level nuclear waste over a period of 24 years, if this Bill moves forward. There would be 272 very large rail casts coming through population centers. This Bill has not passed yet, so a resolution on the part of this City would send a message that we, at the local level, are not ready for these shipments. In addition, a resolution can also, perhaps, if this does move forward and the Bill is passed, give you a legal antecedent when there's a big squabble over whose going to pay for the clean up costs because there are restrictions on how much the industry and the federal government would have to pay for cleaning up a local accident site. No community in Western North Carolina is prepared for an accident involving high level nuclear waste. Each one of these 272 casts would carry the radiation of 240 Hiroshima bombs. Our emergency management across the western part of the State is excellent, but there is no money in the budget for training, for additional personnel, for hospital radiation wards, for you, at the local level, to pick up the tab. The route selections are not made according to what the Department of Energy is saying, but it doesn't take a genius to know where the reactors are and -8-

know where Nevada is and know that we're on the path from the reactors that are east from here. So the towns and cities and counties that get in there with a statement are ahead of the game. Other cities have passed similar resolutions.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "what we ought to be doing with these high level fuel rods is leaving them at the nuclear power plant where they're stored now. Because that's where the security is, that's where the technology is. You don't add the extra risks of transportation and temporary storage somewhere. It's really the only sane thing to do, after the fact. We've already generated this stuff. But 35 years ago we didn't require this industry to think about where they were going to put their waste. We, as homeowners, have to know that we can't spread our garbage around our yards - we would get slapped with a fine pretty quick. So we've never required that of an industry that generates the most lethal waste known to man. The other thing I want to point

out is a couple of weeks ago on the news, I'm sure you were all aware of the fact that there was a terrorist attack on a train in the desert. If we think that that's not going to be happening more and more in this country, then we're hiding our heads in the sand. And not only do we have to worry about terrorism, we, as a Council deal with infrastructure - streets, sidewalks, sewer, water, etc. The federal government has not dealt with a very important infrastructure in this country for too many years. And that's our railbeds. Not the trains, but the railbeds. And many and many of the derailments of trains that occur, is because the railbeds are not maintained, are old, are breaking down and falling apart."

Ms. Hoyle stressed that these decisions are not in stone yet and passing the resolution shows that we are getting involved in the public debate before the decisions are made. We were able to track high level nuclear waste from overseas very easily, so what we're saying is that if we can do it, any terrorist organization can find out this information and track the shipments.

Upon inquiry of Vice-Mayor Peterson, Mr. Zeller said that he has been to Nevada and New Mexico and citizens have urged him to see what can be done locally. He noted that the State of Nevada is adamantly opposed to the site.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "it has to be done locally at every level. It has been stopped in places. One of the problems out west is there are a lot of Indian reservations that the federal government has a lot of say on what happens on them. But even certain tribes have come up against the feds and stopped them."

Councilwoman Field said that she is personally has a stake in this issue. The nuclear waste is generated. Even if we shut down every nuclear power plant today on the spot, we still have to deal with what we've done. How can we responsibly say that we are not going to find a place or a way to deal with it? She saw a piece of a program on public television about using low level waste or maybe even high level nuclear waste for new ways of dealing with both Cancer and Aids. She wondered if Ms. Hoyle or Mr. Zeller were familiar with the use of nuclear waste for medical research. If the information is correct, what we have stored could possibly be used to help humanity rather than destroy it.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "you're right. We've got the waste and you're right, we've got to be responsible. The most responsible thing is to leave it on site where it is now."

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Councilwoman Field said that to the best of her knowledge why the United States is taking other countries nuclear waste is because we think we'll be more responsible than perhaps other countries who are not as stable as we are.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "one of the reasons we're taking foreign waste is because we're getting agreements that there will be a non nuclear proliferation policy coming from those countries. And it's big business. Chris is absolutely right."

Mr. Zeller explained how the medical community has been developing new ways to do both diagnosis and treatment.

Councilman Swicegood said that no one want's nuclear waste transported through Asheville, however, he would like to be given an opportunity to read all the information presented before acting on the resolution.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that she "handed this out weeks ago. On the front

page there are six items that are listed that basically gives us a synopsis of what that document is. Those six items are real easy to understand. It tells you when the shippings are going to start. It tells you how many casks, how many loads. It tells you what the Bill establishes, it tells you everything you need to know about that Bill. All this resolution does is make a statement on the part of Asheville that we are very concerned about this Bill being passed in Congress that is going to allow rail shipments of high level nuclear waste, some of not even generated in our country, to pass right through our town."

Mr. Zeller said that they did not want to talk to Council about whether the policy is misguided or not, but what Asheville might look forward to doing to protect itself from these shipments if they become a reality. The realities are dealing with public health problems in emergency response and dealing with fiscal problems.

Councilman Watts agreed with Councilman Swicegood and asked for additional time to study the issue.

Councilman McClure said that it disturbs him to hear that we are bringing in nuclear waste from other counties. However, he would like to have some time to understand the issues before passing a resolution.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that our resolution sends a message to Congress that they better slow down on HR 1020 and allow some public debate. That's the whole purpose of the resolution. They have been irresponsible in the nuclear industry for 40 years. That's why we have no place to put this away. At least at the nuclear power plants they have the security, they have the technology that's already in place. It's in pools."

When Councilwoman Field asked why aren't they leaving the nuclear waste in the pools, Councilwoman Sitnick said that "because the pools are filling up. Because we continue to generate a waste that we have never demonstrated the technology that can deal with it. And those pools are filling out. They want to move it from there so that they can continue to generate waste. We have never looked at alternate energy sources. I don't want to get into a discussion about energy, but we have missed the economic boat. Japan and Germany have far surpassed us. We have local people generating energy out of their backyards with wind and water. And this is a country that has the biggest hospital system, the biggest road system, the biggest school system, and we've never - 10-

developed alternative energy. And we continue to rely on nuclear. Even though the federal government, themselves, said that it is not financially responsible to reprocess for plutonium."

When Ms. Hoyle passed Mayor Martin the 95 page HR 1020, Mayor Martin said that the House Resolution will be available for Council to review prior to the topic being brought back up for Council's consideration. Councilwoman Sitnick also suggested Council members read the information she has provided to them previously.

Ms. Hoyle explained that in 1998 we will be passing onto the future generations of America the ownership and liability for the nation's commercial nuclear waste.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "the pickle we're in is because the nuclear industry is one of the most heavily funded, strong lobbies in Congress and they have made it a point to make sure, and they have not been responsible or liable for any of this. And now that they're faced at the backdoor with full pools, they don't know what to do with it. We are being made to eat all of

it."

Upon inquiry of Ms. Hazel Fobes, Mayor Martin said that since Council wants to be more informed, this issue will be postponed and brought up again within the next 30 days.

COUNCILWOMAN SITNICK'S TWO YEAR TERM REPORT CARD

Councilwoman Sitnick briefed Council on the two-year term report card she compiled outlining the City Council's accomplishments up through September 23, 1995. She asked for any additions, corrections, or deletions to her list, which Council furnished to her.

She said that she would give copies of this report card to the new Council because it was a good working document.

Vice-Mayor Peterson felt that for such a diverse Council, they have accomplished a lot in their last term.

Councilwoman Sitnick said that "I think we need to consider having more dialog on Council. There have been times when I wished we just had endless moments to discuss why we all came to some conclusions. Not just going around the table, giving one or two sentences. But there are times when I'd like to know why Rock came to a certain conclusion about something financial or budgetary. Or why Russ offered a little bit of information on something, or Barbara. Because we're right in the thick of it. And there are times when we sit endlessly and listen to the presenters, but I don't have a whole lot of memory listening to members of Council. And the reason I think that's important is because we're the ones that get the phone calls, the letters from the people in the community telling us their thoughts and ideas and their comments and their problems. And I would like to hear and have opportunities for dialog. Maybe two or three times a year we could just have a session to discuss the phone calls we're getting, the letters we're getting, the concerns that are brought to us by our friends, and people we meet in our businesses. I think a little bit more dialog on what's going on that we learn, as Council, as representatives, is important to the way we make decisions and make policy. My old bug-a-boo, public input. I think the next Council ought to seriously consider, and whoever becomes Mayor, that we have some meetings after work so people can come and sit in these sessions and be part of what goes on. I think that at some point the Council ought to find out from the public how they feel about -11-

a full-time Council, full-time Mayor and adequate salaries so that people who have jobs, such as yourselves, can afford to give up a little more of your time and devote more to the City. I think what we ought to start looking towards, not necessarily ask, what are they doing in other cities in North Carolina, but rather looking at Asheville, looking at it's uniqueness and deciding what are the solutions that are best for Asheville. Not just taking what other cities are doing and applying it to here. But really coming up with some creative ideas about solving some of the problems with fundamental reform, rather than just copy-cat policy making. I think that we need to seriously consider impact fees in this community. Impact fees in other communities in this State have not stopped growth, economic development and progress. What impact fees do, they create a revenue stream for a municipality to do what it has to do to keep up, to maintain, to repair, to enlarge, without charging taxes to the taxpayer - without raising taxes. So, we need to look at all possible sources of revenue. The comment I made earlier about a grants officer, in-house. Even if it's a part-time grants officer. Somebody who just sits there with that book that's in the library that's this thick about all the grants available to individuals, organizations and governments. So that we're looking at every possible way to bring money in so that we don't raise taxes. I think

we need to continue our effort to looking at how we can deal with the weeds in our curbs and sidewalk. You know, we talk about economic development. We didn't need the Chamber of Commerce to come and tell us that the weeds and the litter create a bad picture. We know that. And unless, I mean, we as a government cannot solve all the problems. There is a responsibility amongst our citizenry. And if the only responsibility is pulling weeds in front of their businesses and homes, I don't think that's too much to ask. So we've got to figure out a way to inspire the citizens of this community to take some responsibility for their own front yards and their own backyards. I think that we need to seriously look into hiring an arborist for this City so that never again, and I repeat, never again, do we have a tragedy like occurred at Jones School. So that we don't have a tragedy like occurred up on Town Mountain where 11 trees, major, major treasured trees were destroyed because of the wanton actions of a tree trimmer. And if you have somebody in-house who knows about this stuff. And again, we don't have to spend money. We have the possibility of a volunteer from the Arboretum to George Briggs. Somebody who would be working with the City to protect our trees. We are a Tree City USA and we ought to be real proud of it. And the last thing I want to say is, I think the next Council, and this is going to be a real tough one. I mean, other than consolidation and the issues we've looked at, I think we seriously need to consider whether this City will benefit by having either an elected school board or a half-elected, half-appointed school board or if we really are better off with an appointed school board. We need to seriously examine that issue, because something is wrong. Something is amiss in our City schools. We all know it, and you know what, there is nobody to point a finger at. It's just a problem that has grown over the years and one that needs us to solve it. And when I say us, I mean the whole community. And I don't know whether a referendum on the ballot is the way to decide whether we need appointed, elected or half and half, but I think that it's up to the City Council to discuss substantively and seriously so that we can take care of the problems in our schools and not allow it to grow and get more out of hand. I think you for your patience. You noticed that the Citizen-Times said it would be her last opportunity, but I will be here for another few weeks. I don't know how, maybe it's wishful thinking on the part of some folks, I will be here and I will be giving my final speech that won't involve any issues, it will be just from the heart."

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Mayor Martin thanked Councilwoman Sitnick for all the time and effort she put into the report card. He said that he was impressed with the way she followed projects through their completion.

Councilman McClure stated that he truly respected and admired Councilwoman Sitnick.

OTHER BUSINESS

Jones School Sidewalks

Councilwoman Field said that she has received a letter from John Cort stating that if the City wanted to put a sidewalk in at Jones School, now would be the time to coordinate it.

Council unanimously agreed to direct the Public Works Department to work with Mr. Cort on the correct grades for sidewalks and then prioritize the project and when money is available, we can put the sidewalks in. She, along with Vice-Mayor Peterson and Councilwoman Sitnick, wanted no more trees cut, but suggested perhaps a walking path with pervious materials.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

CITY CLERK MAYOR
